

MANHATTAN PROJECT II

1000 16th St., NW, Suite 810
Washington, DC 20036

June 8, 1992

Dear Presidents Bush and Yeltsin,

As individuals and national and international organizations long and deeply concerned over the threat of nuclear war and the problems of nuclear proliferation, we are writing to you with a great sense of urgency.

We welcome your recent initiatives and proposals on nuclear weapons reductions. They present the world with an unparalleled opportunity to make a decisive breakthrough in reducing the danger of nuclear war.

At the same time, however, we believe that both your current proposed ceilings -- 4700 or 2500 strategic warheads, respectively -- are still so high as to undermine mutual efforts to deal decisively with the threat of nuclear proliferation and of regional use of nuclear weapons throughout the world. This is especially true in the absence of global norms -- in particular, norms accepted by the U.S. -- against continued testing and against first-use of nuclear weapons.

Further dramatic changes in the projected ceilings on U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons and in stated policy concerning the production, testing and use of nuclear weapons are needed now if we are to seize the moment.

We are initiating, therefore, a Manhattan Project II, to bring to the tasks of reducing and dismantling nuclear weapons, and preventing their proliferation and use, the same time frame and sense of urgency as the original Manhattan Project that built the first atomic bombs between 1942-1945. Our goal is to reduce the danger of nuclear war to near zero by the end of this century.

To this end, we believe that the United States should, in time for the upcoming summit meeting in Washington, D.C. on June 16-17, join Russia in adopting a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons and in announcing a moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons, seeking to sign a Comprehensive Test Ban before 1995.

At the summit we urge you both to announce a commitment ultimately to reduce nuclear warheads of the United States and Russia to 1000 or less each, and to invite other nations to join in a system of mutual controls.

In addition, the United States and Russia should announce at the June summit agreements to:

- * Verifiably register all nuclear weapons. Agree to eliminate all strategic warheads reduced by START or subsequent agreements. Put under bilateral or international safeguards the transport and storage of all nuclear warheads committed to be dismantled without replacement. Accept reciprocal inspection immediately.
- * Verifiably eliminate all tactical nuclear weapons.
- * Pursue confidence-building measures including further reductions in alert levels.
- * Preserve the ABM Treaty, narrowly interpreted.
- * Verifiably end the production of fissile materials for weapons use and put fissile materials recovered from dismantled warheads under international safeguards.
- * Seek universal adherence to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) or other forms of multilateral control, and agree to a strengthened anti-proliferation regime with enhanced and non-discriminatory inspection.

Taken together and implemented with the utmost urgency, we believe these policy changes can decisively reduce the likelihood of proliferation and the danger of nuclear war. We also believe that failure to make such changes will adversely affect United States and Russian security interests and the cause of world peace. We urge you therefore to adopt and announce the policy changes outlined above at your summit meeting this June.

Individual Signers [Advisory Board - in formation - and officers of Manhattan Project II]

William Colby
Jonathan Dean
Daniel Ellsberg
Bernard Feld
Randall Forsberg
Margaret Brenman-Gibson
Kurt Gottfried
Morton H. Halperin
Sarah Harder
Carl Kaysen

Robert Livingston
Bernard Lown
Philip Morrison
Robert K. Musil
Christopher Paine
George Rathjens
Joseph Rotblat
Kosta Tsipis
Frank von Hippel
Paul Warnke

Organizations Signing

Alliance for Child Survival
Alliance for Our Common Future
American Baptist Churches USA, Office of Governmental Relations
American Friends Service Committee - Washington Office
Americans for Democratic Action
Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility

Berlin Information Center for Transatlantic Security (FRG)
British American Security Information Council
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (UK)
Central Conference on American Rabbis
Church of the Brethren Washington Office
Committee for National Security
Council for A Livable World
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Friends of the Earth
Fund for New Priorities in America
Greenpeace
Initiative of Natural Scientists, "Responsibility for Peace" (FRG)
Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies
International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War
International Women's Peace Initiative
Jesuit Social Ministries, National Office
Keeping the Promise to Maryland's Children Coalition
Living Without Weapons (FRG)
Medical Action for Global Security (UK)
Mennonite Central Committee, Washington Office
Methodists United for Peace With Justice
NATO Alerts Network (BE)
National Commission for Economic Conversion and Disarmament
National Peace Foundation
National Women's Conference Committee
Natural Resources Defense Council
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Nuclear Free America
Pax Christi, USA
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Professionals' Coalition for Nuclear Arms Control
Psychologists for Social Responsibility
Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association
SANE/FREEZE: Campaign for Global Security
Scientists for Global Responsibility (UK)
The Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot
20/20 Vision National Project
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
United Church of Christ, Office of Church in Society
Women for Meaningful Summits
Women Strike for Peace
Women's Action for New Directions
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Women's League of Conservative Judaism
YWCA of the USA

uranium recovered from them under safeguards, and implementing international safeguards to assure a cutoff in the further production of these materials for weapons.

In a written statement, Manhattan Project scientist Ray E. Kidder, recently retired from the Lawrence Livermore weapons lab, stressed the "bi-stable" nature of a test ban, that is, "unless all of them agree to a permanent halt in testing, none of them will."

Kidder wrote that the five openly nuclear nations should agree on a comprehensive test ban by the end of 1995, and that, based on his "recent evaluation of the safety of the U.S. nuclear stockpile," the U.S. could accomplish its safety goals with four tests conducted in the next three years.

Kidder's work provided the technical basis for House passage June 4 of a one-year U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing.

The scientists also presented a statement from Prof. Glenn Seaborg, a Manhattan Project scientist, winner of the Nobel Prize for his isolation of plutonium and head of the Atomic Energy Commission under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, who wrote: "I continue to believe that a comprehensive test ban is in the best interests of the United States and all the countries of the world. The advantages of an immediate mutual moratorium and of a comprehensive test ban outweigh, in my judgment, any perceived benefits of further tests for any reason."

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